(a) whether it is a fact that the Finance Ministry is considering to allow foreign banks to acquire majority stake in some of the profit making Government of India-owned banks;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether this will dilute Government's commitment that the public sector character of public sector banks would not be changed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Supplementary Demands for Grants

243. SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Finance Ministry has indicated to various Ministries/Departments that no fresh expenditure proposal would be entertained for Supplementary Demands; and

(b) if so, what is the rational behind such advice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FIANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) and (b) Although Ministries/Departments have been advised to adhere to Budget 2000-2001 as approved by Parliament, the proposals for first Batch of Supplementary Demands for Grants will be considered only in cases of recoupment of advance from the Contigency Fund of India, expenditure against court decrees additional expenditure attracting limitations of new service and certain unavoidable and inescapable additional expenditure.

Economic Packages for Orissa

244. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce any economic packages for Orissa;